



RESEARCH ARTICLE

Academic Motivation and Social Support as Predictors of College Readiness in Post-Pandemic Students

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Abstract

College readiness refers to students' ability to successfully transition to higher education without requiring remedial coursework. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has introduced new policies in the education sector, particularly the widespread implementation of online learning across all educational levels. This shift has led to limited interaction between students and teachers, negatively affecting students' college readiness. This study aims to investigate the relationship between academic motivation and social support on college readiness in the post-COVID-19 context. A total of 294 respondents participated in this study by completing a questionnaire. The instruments used include the CAYCI Career and College Readiness Scale, the Academic Motivation Scale (AMS), and the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS). Data were analyzed using linear regression with JAMOV software version 2.5.3. The results show a significant relationship between academic motivation and social support with college readiness ($p < 0.001$). Consequently, the null hypothesis is rejected. To promote optimal college readiness, it is recommended that schools implement specialized programs focused on college preparation, such as regular academic tutoring, independent learning skills training, and mentoring activities can be implemented as external support mechanisms to strengthen students' college readiness. Future research should also examine additional factors influencing college readiness among students.

Keywords: College Readiness, Academic Motivation, Social Support, COVID-19, College Students

INTRODUCTION

The Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19), which first emerged in Wuhan in December 2019, has caused significant disruption across various sectors of human life worldwide (Mishra & Tripathi, 2020; Souza et al., 2021). Individuals infected with the COVID-19 virus may experience mild to moderate respiratory symptoms, which can lead to the onset of other health complications (Mseleku, 2020). Consequently, the COVID-19 pandemic has had profound effects not only on physical and mental health (Mseleku, 2020) but also on economic (Roy, 2020), social mobility (Montacute, 2020) and education (Chandasiri, 2020; Daniel, 2020).

In the field of education, social distancing measures due to the COVID-19 pandemic have led to the closure of training institutions, schools, and universities in most countries. Limited accessibility has brought about a shift in the mode of delivering education, namely through online

platforms as the primary medium of learning (Pokhrel & Chhetri, 2021). In response to this change, the government has issued a new policy requiring all levels of education to implement online-based distance learning (E-learning) (Radha et al., 2020; Rulandari, 2020). This policy has been adopted in various countries, including China (Chen et al., 2020), Jepang (Kita et al., 2022), the United States (Almawee et al., 2021), and Indonesia (Putra et al., 2020).

Online learning aims to provide students and teachers with a platform to interactively communicate despite geographical barriers while adhering to health protocols (Churiyah & Sakdiyyah, 2020; Nafrin & Hudaidah, 2021). It also serves as a form of collaborative learning that mitigates the limitations imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic (Tsai et al., 2016). However, online learning has several drawbacks, including issues related to accessibility, pedagogy, dependence on gadgets, and reduced college readiness. The latter is particularly affected by the lack of direct consultation with teachers when students encounter learning difficulties (Sintema, 2020; Pokhrel & Chhetri, 2021). In addition, the obstacles in online learning have also affected crucial aspects of college readiness, such as cognitive and metacognitive skills, effective study skills, and the ability to navigate good college choices (Caldwell et al., 2021; Grimes, 2024).

College readiness is defined as students' achievement in entering higher education without requiring remediation, supported by social and academic skills,

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learning abilities, and knowledge related to the targeted college (Conley, 2007; Duncheon & Muñoz, 2019; Kurlaender et al., 2019). In Indonesia, the active role of guidance and counseling teachers is crucial in directing and guiding students toward higher education (Muslihati et al., 2024). Guidance and counseling teachers are able to assist students in enhancing personal motivation, effort to achieve success, external social conditions, and the cultural differences between college and school (Raaper, 2016; Convertino & Graboski-Bauer, 2017). College readiness can be measured using standardized tests that assess various aspects of students' skills in preparing for higher education (Barnes & Slate, 2010; Chapa et al., 2014). One such test is the College and Career Readiness Scale developed by the Community and Youth Collaborative Institute (CAYCI), which measures constructs related to school and parental involvement, social skills, self-regulation, social support in learning, and academic motivation (Anderson-Butcher & Amorose, 2012).

Research by Knox (2024) found that academic motivation is positively correlated with adolescents' readiness for college or career. Academic motivation is the drive within individuals to achieve academically, enabling them to prepare well for higher education (Kyllonen et al., 2014; Astuti & Zakaria, 2021). To enhance academic motivation, students need to adopt more adaptive behaviors, such as planning, perseverance, and focus in learning (Bugler et al., 2013).

Academic motivation is influenced by internalizing and externalizing behaviors, including emotions, stress, anxiety, fatigue, cheating, and bullying (Bugler et al., 2015; Pascoe et al., 2020). In terms of college readiness, academic motivation is also shaped by social factors, such as social background, peers, parental and educator involvement, as well as supportive encouragement from various individuals in students' lives (Holtforth & Michalak, 2012; Fan et al., 2012; Deangelo & Franke, 2016).

Students need social support from parents, educators, and peers to effectively prepare for college (Porter & Polikoff, 2012). Research by Leonard (2013) highlights the importance of parental involvement in supporting students' learning and career readiness. The role of parents as a place for students to express their feelings and receive emotional support is significant (O'Neill, 2023). In addition, peer support also influences college readiness. Research by Marciano (2017) explains that having friends who are enthusiastic about college can motivate students to strive for college enrollment. Peers can also assist students academically and help them become college-ready. Social support encompasses strategies aimed at enhancing student achievement by providing integrated, comprehensive, and coordinated assistance, including emotional, informational, instrumental, structural, and evaluative support (Savitz-romer et al., 2009; Iglesia et al., 2014). Social support and academic motivation are significantly related, making both essential components in fostering students' readiness for learning (Ahmadi et al., 2023).

This study aims to examine the relationship between academic motivation, social support, and college readiness in students who experienced online learning during their final year of high school. The emergence of COVID-19 has created challenges in school performance, academic achievement, and college preparedness (Camacho-Zuniga et al., 2021; Birmingham et al., 2023). The hypothesis of this study is that academic motivation and social support are associated with college readiness in students after the COVID-19 pandemic.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Participant characteristics and research design

This study employs a quantitative approach using regression analysis techniques aimed at determining the influence of academic motivation and social support on students' college readiness. The criteria for this study are students from the 2020, 2021, and 2022 cohorts who have participated in online learning during the Covid-19 pandemic while attending the final year of high school.

Sampling procedures

This study uses purposive-convenience sampling technique, where subjects voluntarily participate in the research by giving consent before filling out the questionnaire distributed through group chats and social media platforms. Respondents complete the questionnaire using Google Forms online, aiming to ensure accessibility for respondents across Indonesia.

Sample size, power, and precision

This study has 284 respondents with varying demographic characteristics. The sample size selection was based on assumptions derived from calculations using G-power with a test family, specifically the f-test. In the determination phase, the effect size was set to 0.05, alpha error to 0.05, power error to 0.8, and the number of predictors was 2. Therefore, with these calculations, a sample size of 196 was determined. It can be concluded that the sample size in this study meets the assumptions.

CAYCI Career and College Readiness Scale.

This instrument is used to measure college and career readiness through a cross-sectional survey. The instrument consists of 7 items with 13 constructs, and the highest construct is academic motivation, with a value of .65. The CAYCI Career and College Readiness Scale uses a 5-point Likert scale (strongly disagree = 1; strongly agree = 5). The validity test was conducted using confirmatory factor analysis with maximum likelihood estimation procedure in LISREL 9.2. Anderson-Butcher & Amorose (2012) reported that the 7 items loaded onto a single latent factor, which is college and career readiness. This instrument has been used in a survey regarding students' life understanding and their readiness for college and career work (Anderson-Butcher et al., 2016).

Academic Motivation Scale

Academic motivation is measured using the Academic Motivation Scale (AMS), which assesses intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, and amotivation in students. AMS consists of seven subscales, each containing four items. Each scale evaluates three types of motivation: intrinsic motivation (to know, to accomplish, to experience stimulation), extrinsic motivation (external regulation, introjected regulation, identified regulation), and amotivation. AMS uses a 7-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree). The initial validation included back-translation, confirmatory factor analysis, and reliability testing. Vallerand et al. (1992) reported the internal consistency for the AMS subscales measured using Cronbach's alpha, ranging from .83 to .86, except for the identification subscale, which had a value of .62. AMS has

been widely used in various studies examining student motivation (Chow & Wong, 2020).

Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MPSS)

This instrument aims to measure the amount of social support received from three sources: family, friends, and significant others. The Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MPSS) (Zimet et al., 1988) consists of 12 items, with 4 items representing each dimension. The assessment is conducted on a 7-point Likert scale (strongly disagree = 1; strongly agree = 7). This scale has passed reliability testing using Cronbach's alpha, yielding a result of .85.

Data Analysis.

This study uses linear regression analysis to determine whether there is a relationship between academic motivation, social support, and college readiness in students post-Covid-19 pandemic. All variables are analyzed using JAMOV 2.5.3 software. Standardized coefficients (β) and confidence intervals (95% CI) are calculated to compare the relative importance of each variable in the equation. R-squared (R^2) and change in R-squared (ΔR^2) are examined to determine the goodness-of-

fit of the regression model. Additionally, assumption tests are conducted, including normality, heteroscedasticity, linearity, independence, and multicollinearity tests. Finally, hypothesis testing is performed for the study.

RESULTS OF STUDY

Descriptive Statistical Analysis

Based on the distribution of the demographic statistical data of respondents (Table 1), it is evident that in the sex category, the average percentage of females (76.3%) in the variables of academic motivation and college readiness was higher than that of males (23.6%). For the social support variable, both sexes exhibited the same average. In the type of school, the average percentage of respondents from public senior high schools (30.4%) and public vocational high schools (6.2%) in the variable of college readiness was higher than those of other type of school. Regarding the variables of academic motivation and social support, the average percentage of respondents from private vocational high schools (3.5%) was higher than that of other type of school.

Table 1.
Distribution of Demographic Statistical Data of Respondents (N=294)

Demographics	N(%)	Academic Motivation Mean	SD	Social Support Mean	SD	College Readiness Mean	SD
Sex							
Female	196 (76.3)	150	15.5	122	24.8	28.1	3.32
Male	61 (23.7)	143	19.0	122	23.1	27.7	3.46
Type of School							
Private Islamic School	75 (29.2)	151	16.6	120	23.6	28.1	3.31
Public Islamic School	37 (14.4)	151	16.8	119	29.6	27.5	4.20
Private Senior High School	42 (16.3)	146	19.5	122	22.4	27.7	2.95
Public High School	78 (30.4)	147	15.3	124	24.6	28.2	3.41
Private Vocational High School	9 (3.5)	153	13.5	127	17.1	27.3	2.83
Public Vocational High School	16 (6.2)	145	15.0	123	23.6	28.2	2.43
Residential Area							
Rural	106 (40.9)	149	14.4	122	24.4	27.8	3.42
Urban	121 (47)	149	18.4	123	24.3	28.0	3.39
Sub Urban	31 (12.1)	147	16.8	113	23.2	28.4	3.02
Higher Education Institution							
Public University	184 (71.6)	150	16.0	122	24.3	28.0	3.46
Private University	73 (28.4)	146	18.0	122	24.5	27.8	3.07

Furthermore, in the residential area category, the average percentage of respondents residing in sub urban areas (12.1%) in the variable of college readiness was higher than that in other residential areas. The average percentage of respondents living in urban areas (41%) in the variables of academic motivation and social support was higher than that in other residential areas. Additionally, in the higher education institution category, it was observed that the average percentage of respondents continuing to public universities (71.6%) in the variables of academic motivation and college readiness was higher than those attending private universities (28.4%). Both higher education institution categories exhibited the same average social support variables. Overall, the standard deviation was smaller than the mean, indicating that the data were less varied.

Assumption Test Results

The normality test was conducted using a Q-Q plot, which indicates that the data are normally distributed, as

almost all data points lie close to the residual line (Figure 1).

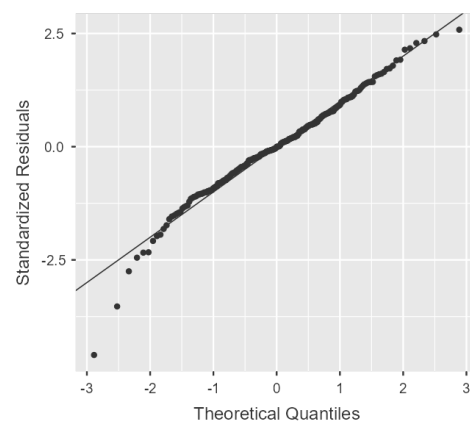


Figure 1. *Q-Q Plot Normality Tests*

This study used a residual plot to test for linearity and heteroscedasticity in the data. Based on the linearity test results, the data were evenly distributed around the linear line at the zero point and did not form a linear curve. Additionally, the data did not exhibit heteroscedasticity because the points were randomly scattered and did not form a funnel or hill/valley shape (Figure 2).

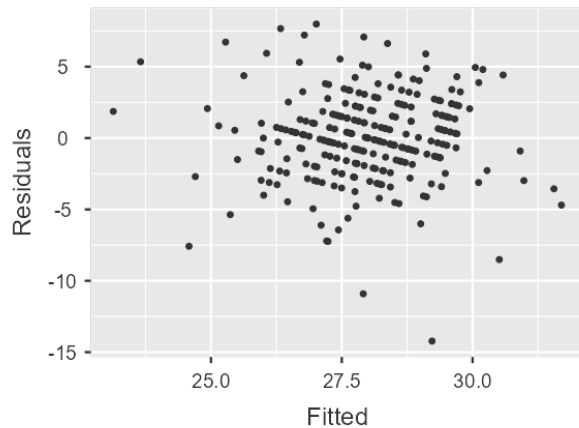


Figure 2. Residual Plot Linearity dan Heteroscedasticity Tests

The autocorrelation test was performed using the Durbin-Watson method, which yielded a result of DW = 2.20 ($DW > 2$). This indicates that the data did not show signs of autocorrelation, as the DW value was close to 2 (independent) and the residuals were negatively correlated (Table 2).

Table 2.
Durbin-Watson Test for Autocorrelation

Autocorrelation	DW Statistic	p
-0.109	2.20	0.098

The multicollinearity test results showed that VIF = 1.12 ($1 \leq VIF \leq 10$). This suggests that the two predictors do not exhibit multicollinearity, meaning that they are not correlated with each other.

Table 3.
Collinearity Statistics

	VIF	Tolerance
Social Support	1.12	0.890
Academic Motivation	1.12	0.890

Hypothesis Testing

Based on the analysis using linear regression, Table 4 shows that the regression model is significant, with $F(2, 254) = 22.2$, $p < 0.001$, and $R^2 = 0.142$. These results indicate that there is a relationship between academic motivation, social support, and college readiness, accounting for 14.2% of the variance. This indicates that the model used has a low to moderate predictive ability. In other words, 85.8% of the remaining variation in college readiness is explained by other factors not included in this regression model. These factors include demographic data (such as sex, economic and social status, residential area, and school environment), college preparation programs, and academic achievement.

Table 4.
Model Fit Measures

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	F	Overall Model Test		
					df1	df2	p
1	0.385	0.149	0.142	22.2	2	254	<.001

Table 5.
Model Coefficients - College Readiness

Predictor	Estimate	SE	t	p	Stand. Estimate
Intercept	16.8834	1.79603	9.40	<.001	
Social Support	0.0319	0.00845	3.78	<.001	0.232
Academic Motivation	0.0485	0.01238	3.92	<.001	0.240

The coefficient model (Table 5) revealed that both variables were significantly related to college readiness. Specifically, academic motivation has a significant effect in preparing students for college ($t = 3.92$; $p < 0.001$). Meanwhile, social support also has a significant effect in helping students emotionally to be ready for college ($t = 3.78$; $p < 0.001$).

DISCUSSION

This study aimed to examine the relationship between academic motivation, social support, and college readiness among students in post-COVID-19 Indonesia. The findings indicate a significant association among these variables, as demonstrated by $p < 0.001$ ($p < 0.05$). Consequently, the

study's hypothesis was supported. This result aligns with previous research highlighting the role of social factors in enhancing academic motivation, which in turn fosters students' preparedness for higher education (Kyllonen et al., 2014; Mitchall et al., 2018; Engin, 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic has negatively impacted students' academic motivation and presented social challenges that have restricted their access to learning opportunities (Aboagye et al., 2020; Zaccoletti et al., 2020). Government policies mandating e-learning have required students to adapt to new learning modalities, influencing their motivation to learn and overall college readiness (Harandi, 2015; Horzum et al., 2015).

Another finding of this study is the significant relationship between academic motivation and college readiness. This is consistent with previous research showing that academic motivation can drive students to

achieve and enhance their academic performance (Dogan, 2015; Jiang et al., 2018). To prepare students for success in higher education, a comprehensive understanding of the key concepts of motivation, including self-efficacy, attribution, and self-regulation (Fong et al., 2017). Strong motivation can play a crucial role in fostering for students to succeed and thrive in college (Zumbrunn et al., 2014; Fong et al., 2017).

Several theories have been proposed to explain students' academic motivation, one of which is Self-Determination Theory, which emphasizes the critical role of autonomous motivation in promoting optimal development. Autonomy is closely related to the sense of belonging, namely, the experience of feeling connected to others. When these psychological needs are satisfied, they can enhance academic motivation; conversely, when they are thwarted, they may diminish it (Fong, 2022). Another relevant theory is Bandura's (1986) Social Cognitive Theory, which highlights the reciprocal interaction between an individual's environment, personal beliefs, and behavior. A strong belief in one's capabilities (self-efficacy) fosters the motivation to engage in behaviors aimed at achieving desired goals.

Academic motivation comprises two dimensions, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, which represent two distinct forms of motivation in understanding students' achievement behaviors (Lemos & Veríssimo, 2014). Intrinsic motivation involves engaging in activities for personal satisfaction, whereas extrinsic motivation is driven by external rewards (Legault, 2017; Ryan & Deci, 2020). Social support from peers, parents, and schools is a significant factor in enhancing students' academic motivation (Song et al., 2015).

This study also found a strong association between social support and school readiness ($p < 0.05$). This finding is consistent with research indicating that social support for students can serve as an effective intervention to enhance their success in higher education (Awang et al., 2014; Wibrowski et al., 2017). Social support originates from parents, friends, and significant others involved in the academic achievement process, aiding students' success in transitioning to college (Nettles et al., 2014). Several studies have identified social support as a crucial component in enhancing students' academic motivation during the COVID-19 pandemic (Rosa, 2020; Mardiani, 2021; Kusumaningrini & Sudibjo, 2021; Amseke et al., 2021). Social support is a key determinant of in preparing students for higher education.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

College readiness is defined as a student's successful transition to higher education, demonstrated by their mastery of academic skills without the need for remedial programs. The findings of this study clearly indicate that academic motivation and social support significantly influence students' readiness for college. These two predictors may serve as key determinants of academic achievement, reinforced by the social support provided by parents, peers, and other significant individuals in students' lives. The implication of these findings is the need for educational institutions to develop interventions that prioritize the enhancement of students' academic motivation. Furthermore, programs such as regular academic tutoring, independent learning skills training, and mentoring activities can be implemented as external support mechanisms to strengthen students' college

readiness. Future research is encouraged to further explore additional factors that may affect college readiness, particularly among students in their final year of secondary education.

DECLARATION

Ethics approval and consent to participate

This study has received ethical approval by letter number (B-2203.17/Un.02/L3/TU.00.9/03/2022) from Chairman of Research and Community Services / LPPM Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga, Yogyakarta, Indonesia.

Consent for publication N/A

Availability of Data and Material (ADM)

The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author. The data are not publicly available due to privacy or ethical restrictions.

Competing interests

Authors have no conflicts of interest to be declared.

Authors' contributions

VJ contributed to the study conception and design. Material preparation and data collection were performed by VJ. Data analysis was performed by VJ. The first draft of the manuscript was written by VJ and checked by VJ.

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